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THE

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RELIGIOUS, INSTRUCTIVE, AND ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE.

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THE GLASS OF WATER.

A Tale.

CHAPTER II.

After the departure of the stranger, Fabio again entered the apartment, still grumbling against the curate for the hospitality he had just exercised. "How," said he, "could you receive into your house a man on whose forehead is set the mark of infamy? Did not his fierce looks and threatening air, his rags, his wound, and his carabine, show this guest of yours to be a villian, a brigand? Must men of this description find an asylum in the very sanctuary? I think a little prudence—"

"Be silent, Fabio," interrupted the curate; "what I have done is no business of yours. Know also that this man was in an unfortunate condition, and that it was but a duty which I owed to religion and humanity to share my bread with him. You speak of prudence. Well, suppose I had driven him away, and that he really is what you suspect him to be, he would perhaps have returned with some of his band, and plundered every thing that we have. You see what we should have gained. Besides, you are not sure that the man is really a brigand, and, though he has the appearance of it, he may perhaps be a good Christian after all, so do not be too hasty in your opinions; and if in future I bring any one here with me, do not trouble yourself with giving me your advice, for I tell you that I intend to remain master in my own house."

Fabio, silenced by these reasons, left the room grumbling, and went to reflect in the kitchen on the lesson he had just received. The curate took his breviary, and went to recite his office in the garden.

All of a sudden he heard the report of a musket, then another, and several in quick succession with the sound of a close engagement. The sound drew nearer and nearer the village, and interrupted his prayer. "What can be the meaning of this?" said he within himself, "so many musket shots and at such an hour in our neighbourhood! More disturbers of the peace! alas! we shall never be without them in this country!"

Whilst he gave himself up to these sad reflections, the garden door opened quickly, and his late guest rushed in past him towards the house, but stopped on perceiving the priest. "Here," said he in a low voice, throwing a purse of money at his feet, "take this money—oh my poor wife! oh my wretched children!—down in the ravine—near the river—take pity on them."

By this time a troop of gens-d'armes had followed up the unforunate man, and he, seeing his pursuers so close upon him, offered no farther resistance. The gens-d'armes seized him, bound his hands behind his back, and laid him on the ground. The curate approached, and wished to interpose between the agents of the military and their victim; but all in vain, they would not listen to him. "He has done us too much harm already," said one of the gens-d'armes, "and he shall not escape us again; he is ripe enough to serve for food for the crows."

The curate started back on perceiving the blood spurting from a deep wound which the unfortunate man had just received in the thigh. "Permit me at least, my friends," said he, "to dress this wound. You cannot take this man with you in the state in which he is, he would die on the road."

"And no great loss," replied the chief of the gens-d'armes, "to get quit of the villain at once. Do you know, Rev. Sir, who it is in whom you take so much interest? It is a pity your charity has no worthier object than the chief of the rebels, Joseph Ribeira, that brigand who has done so much harm. He has got a good look out, I assure you."

"No matter," said the curate with a sigh. "This man is our brother, he is in misfortune, and we are bound to assist him."

These words calmed a little the rage of the gens-d'armes, and the wound was dressed. The brigand asked for a glass of water. "May the Lord repay you for this work of charity," said he, pressing to his lips the curate's hand. "*Do not forget*, I implore you." He drank the glass of water and the gens-d'armes hurried him away.

The curate returned to his house, laid aside his breviary, took his hat and cane, and went out in spite of the remonstrances of Fabio, who tried every means to detain him at home. With a quick step he hurried to the place to which the brigand had directed him. Descending into the ravine, he found himself on the banks of the river; but after a diligent search among the bushes, could discover nothing. Stopping at length to listen he heard a deep sigh, and on advancing a few steps, discovered in a little hollow a woman who had just received a musket shot, and was at the point of death. At her side were two children, one of whom might have been about three years, and the other ten months old. He approached with a shudder, and had but just time to pronounce over

the woman the form of absolution, when she breathed her last. The two children filled the air with their cries, having not yet recovered from the fright into which they had been thrown by the horrible scene which seemed to have preceded the agony of their poor mother. The arrival of the curate, his long black robe and large hat, increased their terror. They without doubt took him for one of those who had pursued their father; but the worthy priest soon dissipated their fears by the caresses which he lavished upon them.

"Poor children," said he to them, "yet so young, and without parents! your mother has just expired, and your father——may God have mercy on him! Come to me; I will be your father." He took the younger child in his arms, gave his hand to the elder, and made some turns to extricate himself from the ravine with the sweet burden which he carried.

Meanwhile the night had descended on the earth, and covered with its shades the parched and barren fields which the worthy curate traversed. To see him loaded with the tender babe which he had just discovered, one would have taken him for the Good Shepherd of the gospel, running after the lost sheep, and bearing it upon his shoulders to the fold. The holy man was happy in being able to do another good action. This day, at least, had not been a lost one to him, since he had performed an act of charity, and was now going to crown all by one of the most beautiful works of christian virtue, that of receiving into his house two orphans. His heart dilated at the thought of snatching from misery, and perhaps from death, the innocent creatures who had been entrusted to him; and what would have filled with fearful anxiety a soul less noble than his own, became for *him* a subject of the sweetest consolation. "Well," said he, as he advanced slowly towards his dwelling, "since I have not been a natural father, I will be one at least in spirit, and by faith; I will adopt these children, and bring them up for God. This is not as the world would say, the effect of chance; it is the Lord who has directed this event; my meeting with the brigand, and all that followed, enter into the designs of this amiable providence which conducts all with so much wisdom, and, at the same time, under a veil of mystery.—But here I am, close to home! What will the good Fabio say when he sees these children? He will most certainly cry out against me, and treat me as a fool. No matter; the work has been begun, and must be completed." With these reflections the worthy priest re-entered his house.

A. G.

CHEAP HOT BATHS IN CHINA.

In the town of Shanghae, as well as in many other large Chinese towns, there are a number of hot-water bathing establishments, which must be of great importance as regards the health and comfort of the natives. Let me describe one which I passed daily during my residence in Shanghae. There are two outer rooms used for undressing and dressing; the first and largest is for the poorer classes, the second for those who consider themselves more respectable, and who wish to be more private. As you enter the largest of these rooms, a placard which is hung near the door informs you what the charges are, and a man stands there to receive money on entrance. Arranged in rows down the middle and round the sides of both rooms are a number of small boxes or lockers, furnished with lock and key, into which the visitors put their clothes, and where they can make sure of them when they return from the bathing room. The bathing room is entered by a small door at the farther end of the building, and is about thirty feet long and twenty wide; the bath occupying the whole space, except a narrow path round the sides. Those visitors who use the common room pay only six copper cash; the other class pay eighteen, but they in addition have a cup of tea and a pipe of tobacco from the proprietors. I may mention that one hundred copper cash amount to about 4½d. of our money; so that the first class enjoy a hot-water bath for about one farthing, and the other a bath, a private room, a cup of tea, and a pipe of tobacco for something less than one penny.—*Letter in Athenæum.*

STANZAS TO MY DAUGHTER, WHO ASKED ME FOR A TALE.

My darling, come listen to me,
And my counsels keep always in mind;
I would rather enlighten your reason,
Than with folly or flattery blind.

Frivolity, boldness, despise;
Let modesty only adorn:
Her truth is consistent with reason,
While the former elicit our scorn.

Let the morning that shows you the rose,
Remind you at eve she's no more;
So a day will destroy a fine face,
But the virtuous have beauties in store.

Should adversity lurk in your path,
Your bosom with fortitude arm;
Where the timid can only despair,
You may calmly encounter the storm.

But if heaven should bless you with wealth,
And with pleasure and peace crown your years;
Let the indigent claim your relief,
And by your kind care dry their tears.

Be affable, honest, and wise;
Avoid the coquette's flattering art;
Let the candour express'd in thy face,
Show the virtues that reign in thy heart.

If haply this feeble attempt,
My darling from danger shall save;
If I leave her both happy and good,
I shall peacefully sleep in my grave.'

The Clerical Market.—To Patrons of Livings.—A layman wishes to secure the Presentation of a Clergyman to a small living with immediate or very early possession. £2,000 are offered! —*Times.*

LETTERS FROM BELGIUM.

LETTER VIII.

(Continued from page 324.)

Belgium, April 2nd, 1844.

THE church has just been engaged in her beautiful annual work—the first communion of the children; a work always full of exciting feeling to Catholics. It cannot but interest you to be made acquainted with the vigilant care with which these "little ones" are prepared by their good Mother, and the solemnity with which she introduces them to become members of the communion of the body and blood of Christ. I shall, therefore, devote this letter to the giving you some account of our young communicants.

The Church of England administers confirmation before communion. The Mother Church admits her children to confirmation generally only after having communicated; directing thus, in her preparation for communion, all her energy to the great Sacrament, without distracting the tender minds of her young members, by preparing them for two sacraments at once, as if one had any dependance on the other in regard to reception.

She admits them at a very tender age to become communicants, before they enter on the stage of life properly called youth, and while they are indeed children; providing thereby a great security against the age of temptation on which they are about to enter, by the solemn year of instruction and holy training through which they pass during their preparation for first communion.

On learning that our children are prepared for holy communion at eleven and twelve years old, you may be tempted to ask, can such infants be brought to understand the awful Sacrament in which they are made to participate? I will reply to your doubt by detailing to you the system adopted by the Church, and then ask you in return, whether the affectionate, innocent, unprejudiced, impressible, mind of a child, must not of necessity become to Christ, by such a system of training, one of his best-beloved guests, and both in heart (the loving heart of a child) and in understanding, be worthy to sit at the table of Jesus—that kind Friend of their sweet young life; and He who promised a blessing to the giving a cup of cold water to one such little ones, how must He bless the energy and devotion which the priesthood give to this "labour of love!"

A month is allowed to the clergy, during which they may fix their own day for the first communion of the children, from a fortnight before Easter, to a fortnight after. The Sunday fortnight before Easter is the day almost universally chosen. Our pastor, however, found it necessary to defer his first communion this year to the Sunday fortnight after Easter; I shall, therefore, occupy my leisure of the intervening month, in acquainting you with the manner in which the Church prepares her children to receive this blessed Sacrament.

In order to be admitted as communicants, they must understand the Catechism, a much more serious work than learning the short catechism of your church; a work forming almost the religious business of the life of a Catholic. His catechism being a code of theology, containing an epitome of "all those things which Christ has revealed, and has commanded us to believe and observe." *(See Catechism.)* Not to be learned in childhood and laid aside as a school book, but to be so thoroughly understood, and so applied to every circumstance of life, that it may be the constant rule by which to guide the whole of after life, and teach how to die the death of the righteous.

The Catechism of a Catholic differs in different countries, and even in different bishoprics in its form of words, which leads careless observers to suppose that there is no unity in our teaching; a supposition quite opposite to the truth; for let any one collect the catechisms of various lands, and compare them with reflection one with another, and he will find the soft music of Italian syllables, breathe the self-same truths as our harsh untuneful Flemish—and that the English, the French, the Spanish, the American, or the Hindoo, are taught exactly the same doctrine, not differing in one point, except in the form of words employed.

For very young children an Abridgment is used, and frequently a pastor forms a little catechism of his own for his very little children. The plan of teaching also varies, each teacher being at liberty to teach the same truths his own way. Every parish Priest here is bound by strict obligation to have two catechisms in a week, every Sunday, and one week day. Each parent is obliged to send his child to these two weekly catechisms after the age of seven years, but few keep their children from the catechism so long as seven years. Very little children are present, from the age of three and four years, and are proud to have some simple question put to them, to which they have been taught to lisp the answer. From this tender age they attend the catechism till two years after they have celebrated their first communion, a period long enough to provide every Catholic with a competent stock of acquaintance with his religion, and to furnish him with the means of becoming a worthy member of Christ's Church. Nor may he then lay his catechism aside, for no one is allowed to marry, be his rank high or low, till he has undergone a strict, and a very strict, private examination by his Pastor, as to his competency to become master of a household, by his knowledge of his religion. In a word, he must be able to teach his children and servants their duty to God, and to know how to practise his own duty, by a competent knowledge of Theology—that is—his catechism. If persons who present themselves for examination before marriage are found ignorant, they are remanded, and the marriage must be deferred

while they are being instructed. Also one Sunday in every month, the Pastor of a parish must read over from the pulpit the chief parts of the Catechism, such as the Commandments, the Creed, &c. and preach upon the Catechism once a month besides, in a familiar explanatory lecture. For persons whose education and station in life enable them to study their religion at greater length, the Catechism of the Council of Trent supplies two volumes of inestimable value, and which can never be too deeply or too attentively studied. There are persons who rise long before the day in winter mornings, in order to secure an hour's study, with meditation of this, to Catholics, indispensable book.

Thus the respectable devotion of our people in their Churches, and good order and management of their families at home, are accounted for, on witnessing the source whence they have drawn their excellent rules of life.

The Sunday Catechism is given in public, before any of the congregation who choose to stay. It is to us all very edifying and generally very amusing, from the cheerful style in which it is conducted by the Clergy, in order to gain the attention of their young pupils. The week-day Catechism is given privately in the Church. I had not been present at one till yesterday, when I asked permission to attend, in order to acquaint you with its plan. The week-day Catechism is, I find, chiefly a correct repetition of a certain portion of the Catechism, the children being called up one by one to form their class, the Pastor holding a book in his hand and noting them down as absent or present. When the class is formed, a boy asks a question of a girl opposite, who having replied, asks in her turn the next question of the opposite boy, and so on to the end of the lesson. The children are taught to question each other, to enable them to remember both question and answer when alone. When each has repeated its portion, it has a little ticket given to it and returns to its seat. The whole class thus dropping off in true Belgian quietness and good order. One class finished, another is called up —and a portion of the Catechism is repeated suitable to the age of the children who form the class, and so on till all have repeated their lessons. Those who do not answer correctly have no ticket. The tickets are kept by the children, till they have enough to be worth a large one, and these large ones are kept till they are worth a prize, which is given on St. Gregory's day or oftener, as it happens. When the lessons are finished, the children are questioned upon them.

The Sunday Catechism is a sort of familiar lecture, upon the portion of the Catechism which the Pastor has to explain. Sometimes the stories of the Bible are taken, and being interwoven with their catechism lesson, form a very instructive and attractive lecture, easily understood and remembered by the children. Sometimes natural history lends her aid, and they are led to observe the presence and kindness of God in the bird that flies, or the flower that grows, or they are taught to thank God as for his spiritual mercies, so for his temporal—teaching them to think of God in every action—and to love Him for giving them their merry play, their pleasant food, their warm fire, their comfortable bed. Nothing seems left unthought of in these Sunday lectures, which can touch the heart and exercise the mind of a child. The Church, the *Mother* Church, does not allow of the cruelty of obliging tender children to *stand* through an hour's teaching; they are, therefore, seated on forms in the centre of the Church, on each side an open space, the Pastor standing at the end of this space, or walking up and down it, and thus commanding a view of his whole troop. He begins by prayer, during which they kneel; and then commences his Catechism, by requiring some of them to answer the questions of the day's portion of the Catechism, each child stands while replying. The Pastor then familiarly explains this lesson, applying it constantly to the duties and failings of a child. Occasionally questioning one and another to keep up their attention, and distributing trifling rewards to the diligent, reproving the playful and careless, and punishing if necessary.

The Catechism I have in my hand, and which is the one used throughout this country, contains about fifty closely-printed pages; it is divided into forty-one chapters, or "lessons," as our children call them. A pretty good work for a child to learn by heart, and understand so as to bear questioning upon and bring into daily practice—a work to be accomplished, however, by the time they celebrate their first communion, unless in cases of great stupidity, when only so much is learned as is possible, and the rest by necessity overlooked. Beginning so young, however, and having constantly the same book in their hand, taught also in their school as well as in the church, few but can say their catechism well. And many children learn another, enlarged one, long before first communion. So you see our rustic villagers are not so ignorant as strangers represent Catholics to be.

The Catholic Catechism is divided into five principal parts. The first treats of Faith, explaining the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Redemption of Man by Christ Jesus, including an enlarged explanation of the Apostles' Creed. The second part treats of Hope, containing (as the effect of hope), the explanation of Prayer, especially the Lord's Prayer. The third treats of Charity, and contains the explanation of all we must do to be upheld in love to God and our neighbour—viz. keep the commandments of God and of the Church, occupying a fifth part of the book. The fourth part explains the Holy Sacraments, including instruction on the Most Sacred Mass, and all the love of Christ therein declared. The fifth part treats of Christian Justice, Original, Venial, and Mortal Sin; with many holy lessons on subjects for conduct in daily life—such as the Eight Beatitudes, the Works of Mercy, the Four Ends of Man, the Cardinal Virtues and Capital Sins, the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Ghost. Most of these lessons are very instructive. I would copy some of them out for you, but rather recommend you to purchase an English Cath-

olic Catechism. I hear parts of it are being introduced into your schools, and that both teachers and children prefer it to any other, not dreaming, however, from what source the "beautiful answers" come. You will be repaid for the trouble of procuring one of our Catechisms in English, if only by "the Christian's Daily Exercise," at the end. I have only lately possessed one myself, and was struck by its agreement with what we are here taught—the solemn Morning Offering of ourselves to God; the Morning Meditation; the Mass; the Examination of Conscience. So exactly what our pious villagers practise in very deed; even to the little prayer so duly said every time the clock strikes, and the still more impressive action of praying every time a new work is begun. The good old man who comes to bake our bread, praying as he turns up his sleeves to begin, and again as he places the bread in the oven. The woman who washes for us, with her short ready prayer as she places herself before her hard day's work. The farmer who sows our corn, raising his hand in prayer ere he uses it to cast his seed. I should tell you that all such prayers are accompanied by an invocation of the Holy Trinity. Why was I asked a few months since, by a dear and valued Protestant friend, and who had lately visited Rome too—"Do you Catholics believe in the Holy Trinity? Or are you in the Socinian heresy?" How can we be so misunderstood!

Many of the lessons from the fifth part of the Catechism, are repeated daily by all our children with their morning and evening prayers—such as the Seven Corporal Works of Mercy: "to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to ransom the prisoner, to shelter the houseless, to visit the sick, to bury the dead." The Seven Capital Sins: "pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, sloth," with their contrary virtues: "humility, liberality, chastity, meekness, temperance, brotherly love, diligence."

But the grand feature in our catechism teaching, is the character of the Redeemer constantly brought forward as their pattern, and upheld for their love by every motive of gratitude, which the setting forth his precious love in dying to save them can be brought to excite in their childish feelings.

For all such teaching each Pastor must give strict account at the periodical visitation of his Dean, whose bounden duty it is to visit the parishes in his deanery every four years, and to examine as to the catechetical instruction of the children. Our little ones are assembled in the church all neatly dressed, arranged as for "catechism" on their forms. They are thoroughly examined, of course with satisfaction to their venerable examiner, for what parish Priest would dare to neglect his children under so strict a supervision?

Thus prepared till the age of eleven or twelve, generally as soon as first communion is over, the children who are to be prepared for first communion next year are noted down by their Pastor; and notice is publicly given them to be ready with their catechism against the first examination. Each little face brightens with gladness as his or her name is heard to be noted on the happy list. Mothers are warned that from this day the children here named must attend punctually at school and catechism.

In towns or large villages, where the Priesthood have throughout the year too much work, to enable them to give themselves wholly up to the first communicants during the time immediately preceding the day of first communion, they begin seriously to attend to them as soon as they are named. But in small villages such as ours, where the children are constantly under the eye of their Pastor, like the children of a household under the eye of the father, the first communicants are not appointed to extra instruction till Advent Sunday. The new set of children is examined first by the Priest in his own house as soon as first communion is over, as to their forwardness and capability of learning the Catechism alone. Two months are then left to them to prepare for a second examination, when those who are found sufficiently advanced, are named as probationers for first communion. As Advent approaches, every effort is made to advance in good earnest; they are required to attend an extra catechism once a week given privately to them, that is, given in the Church when the congregation is gone. A public place is assigned them in the Church during the services, which they are required punctually to attend. These two little groups, the boys forming one and the girls the other, become thence an object of serious interest to the congregation, whose prayers are requested for them, that they may be duly prepared to participate in the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ.

All through the bitter winter are these little hardy creatures seen running at the peep of day, through snow, or rain, or cold sunshine, to be ready at the daily Mass, and this ended, the Pastor takes them to some retired nook in the Church, to give them the appointed lesson on the Catechism; or he goes the way of the Cross, explaining to his little shivering followers the love of Christ in suffering so much for them, and causes them frequently to forget how much their poor little toes and fingers smart, in talking to them of the sufferings of Christ, in which they are to become willing to participate, and bear their cross as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Indeed I may venture to say, that the pity I often feel for them is quite thrown away, for I never heard a child, nor even a mother, complain of this obligatory attendance at the Church as a hardship, their feelings being quite taken up with the joy of the reward before them—becoming communicants in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar.

This strict attendance for instruction, in order to be admitted as communicants, is equally binding on rich and poor. In parishes where there are children of rank, they must attend exactly as do the poor. Here the ranks in life are not widely different, our only wealthy people being farmers, whose children

attend the village school. The difference, therefore, in their being more or less well informed, depends usually on the difference of intelligence of one child with another.

The duties of Christmas ended, and the new year's visiting beginning to subside, the Pastors of each parish demand the most serious attention to the preparation for first communion from each parent and child, and take this duty as one of their most important. The Catechism is now daily; the countenances of the two little bands take a more and more serious cast, and I may with truth say, assume a heavenly expression, very delightful to an attentive observer. Little childish tricks of fidgeting during Mass, or of whispering while waiting for their lesson after Church service, begin to be laid aside, and the moveable feet and hands which were at a loss for a resting-place, are now stilled in intelligent devotion, and the playful whisper has become the low murmur of infant prayer.

Frequently the Catechism is given immediately after the Church service, and I do love to be present. Any thing that you can imagine of beautiful, any thing you have ever lisped in childhood from our gifted country-women's pages composed for the opening intellect of a child—of a Barbauld—or an Edgeworth—or a Trimmer—or any thing you have ever selected from the sweet pens of later days—from a Jane Taylor—or a Sherwood—or a Hoffland—conjure it all up before you—and you will see something—you will not see it in all its beauty—but you will see *something* of the mind of a Catholic Priest in the exercise of teaching his young probationers for first communion.—Now the winning playfulness, strewing roses along their pleasant path—now the deep lesson in theology, so plainly, yet so powerfully taught—now the stern morality, forcing its necessity on their conviction—now the deformity of some especial sin shown up to them, to turn them from pursuing it—now the loveliness of some especial virtue, made so attractive that the lip of each voluntarily pronounces obedience to its loveliness. Now is the fish taken out of his native waters, to lie before their imagination panting and suffering on the green and sunny bank, or the wild bird is called down from his free element, to mourn and pine away in a narrow cage; and the question asked—"Why does the fish suffer by lying on the pleasant grass—or the wild bird by being in a gilded cage?" and the ready answer of the children—"Because God made the fish to live in water, and the bird to fly in air, and they cannot be happy any where else"—gives the holy teacher his text, from which to show them—that the end of a child's existence being to love God, so he must be miserable if he choose any other end by which to seek for happiness. So naturally leading on to the love of Jesus, who has become man and died for each of them, to save their souls eternally, and is now about to come to visit each of these His redeemed souls in His own Sacred Person, giving His Body to be their food, and His Blood to be their drink in the most Blessed Sacrament, in which they are preparing to participate.

Thus are they led on to the last week before Holy Communion. This week their anxious Pastors give themselves wholly up to them, and they spend their whole time with him, except that of meals and some quiet recreation. Sometimes making it a week of retreat to them, giving them repeated lectures arranged in order. A large portion of this week is devoted to the examination of conscience, when each dear young serious child retires into its own chosen nook in the Church, and there searches into his awakened conscience, as he has been taught to do preparatory to confession, a very important part of the business of this week, as each child has to make a general confession of the sins of its whole life, as far as he or she can remember. It is a very solemn week indeed to them.

[*To be continued.*]

TO MY SISTER, A NUN.

My Sister dear, when thy young heart
With mine so closely grew entwin'd,
I knew that if we e'er should part
The link would still remain behind;
And now I feel, to be with thee
I would give all that's dear to me.

Deep woods and vales my heart delight,
I love bright streams and laughing rills,
And scarcely know so fair a sight
As sunset smiling on our hills;
But when my soul communes with thee,
E'en nature has no charms for me.

At night, when earth is sunk in sleep,
I love to watch the beaming star
That rises sweetly o'er the deep,
To guide the wave-tost mariner;
But still to be an hour with thee
I would give earth, and star, and sea.

They said that ere one summer's flowers
Had bloom'd around the convent walls,
That thou wouldst learn to count the hours,
And feel the languor that enthralls—
Perhaps I wish'd that this might be,
But now I know, peace dwells with thee.

They talk'd of hearts that pine away,
Of roses fading from the cheek,
And how the soul alone could say
What things the lips might never speak;
But when I came, I smil'd to see
That thou wert full of health and glee.

There is a joy which none may feel,
Save who apart from earth remain;
There are delights which only steal
Into the soul without a stain;
These pleasures heaven has made for thee,
And may they thine for ever be. H. W.

Feast of B. V. M.

"TONGUES IN TREES, BOOKS IN THE RUNNING BROOKS."

BY R. M. MILNES. ESQ.

Sick of heart—with all disgusted—
Love and glory—book and lay—
Restless—sullen—discontented—
Wasting all the golden day,
Aimless saunt'ring hither, thither,
Seeking aught to kill the time,
Listless—more than melancholy,
Self-reproaching without crime,
Forth I went one autumn Sunday
In the holy eventide.

Strolling on in varied musing
Over hill—thro' shady lane—
By glist'ning brook—in fragrant meadow—
Near the gently-ebbing main—
Soon my heart was touched and softened,
Pale *Ennui*, the demon, fled,
Nature ope'd her book before me,
And from its broad page I read
Lessons sweet of solemn meaning,
Such as mortal book ne'er taught.

Eye and ear at once were opened
By some kindly viewless power,
Nature's glorious mystic language
Comprehending that same hour;
Star and ocean—bird and flow'ret—
Flocks that strayed the mead along—
Each his admonition murmured
In a many-voic'd throng,
Grave, yet mild reproaches speaking
To my joyless, vacant heart.

Lo! a *Torrent* swept beside me,
Rushing from his mountain-source,
All that checked his way defying
In resistless, daring course;
And, methought, while bounding past me
Spake each wave in accents clear:
"*I* am Heaven's behest fulfilling
Without swerving—without fear—
Ne'er repining—never idle—
Worthless mortal! why art thou?"

Then I marked the cloud majestic
Gliding slow before the breeze,
Spreading kindly shadow over
Mountains—hamlets—plains and trees,
And it seemed to murmur gently
To my spirit, cold and sere:
"*I* am Heaven's behest fulfilling
Without swerving—without fear—
Ne'er repining—never idle—
Worthless mortal! why art thou?"

Then I watched the feathered seedling
Sailing like an airy bark,
Till, in yonder secret crevice
It has reached its destined mark;
And methought I heard it whisper,
As it slowly floated near:
"*I* am Heaven's behest fulfilling
Without swerving—without fear—
Ne'er repining—never idle—
Worthless mortal! why art thou?"

Then the Honey-bee I followed
In his rounds from flower to flower,
Busy ever—therefore happy—
Joyous both in sun and shower,
And amid his low-toned hummings,
Words like these I seemed to hear:
"*I* am Heaven's behest fulfilling
Without swerving—without fear—
Ne'er repining—never idle—
Worthless mortal! why art thou?"

Stars with silv'ry voices murmured—
Ocean spake in solemn tones—
Trees with rustling foliage whispered—
Breezes bore it in their moans—
Ev'ry thing endued with being
Called to me in accents clear:
"*I* am Heaven's behest fulfilling
Without swerving—without fear—
Ne'er repining—never idle—
Worthless mortal! why art thou?"

And why art thou, O worthless mortal!
Highest—fairest—noblest—best!—
Sole inheritor of Glory—
Idle only 'mid the rest?
Why art thou alone a rebel
'Gainst the law that all obey?
Restless—sullen—discontented—
Wasting all the golden day,
Having neither end nor object,
Life to thee a wasted gift?

Hast thou neither trust nor duty?
Shall those noble talents, God
Bade thee use to lofty purpose,
Bear less fruit than yonder clod?
Has the wise DISPOSER ordered
All to *serve* thee, *serving* none?
Like those drones, consuming vilely*
What another's toil has won,
As the withered tree and blighted,
Profitless to all thy kind

Shame upon thee, worthless mortal!
Fling these gloomy vapours off—
Gird thyself for proud exertion
Mindless of the idler's scoff,
Far above his foppish jarring
Vow this vow, distinct and clear:
"*I* will Heaven's behest accomplish
Without swerving—without fear—
Ne'er repining—never idle—
I will be *henceforth* a MAN!

Abstinence and fasting, both periodical and occasional, long as they have been corroborated by the common suffrages of mankind, wholesome as they have been shown to be by the ablest medical writers, and sanctified as they have been by discipline and practices of the church during eighteen successive centuries, have, nevertheless, fallen into disrepute, and have given place to baneful habits of gluttony and voluptuousness, in consequence, as it would seem, of the preponderance of the last-mentioned fallacious source of opinion over the other two. Reason and experience are, in the generality of mankind, more likely to suffer from the bias of passion than authority, because man is an animal, who, considered in the mass, is calculated to be swayed by the latter rather than the former.

Man loves to murmur; he finds pleasure in complaining, but more in living. He delights in receiving only the dark side of the picture, and deepening its dark colours. Read history, he says, and you will find it one tissue of crimes and misfortunes—granted, but histories are but the pictures of great events. We cherish the memory of storms and tempests, and we have no eye to the times of quiet and calm; we do not reflect, that for more than a hundred years there was no sedition in Pekin, Rome, Venice, Paris, or London; that generally there are more tranquil periods in all the large cities than stormy ones; that there are more days of harmlessness and serenity than days of fatal disaster.

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* *Or*, idly.

ENGLISH STORIES.

No. 2.

After the death of the great and holy King Alfred, my dear friends, whom I cannot believe you have forgotten, there reigned seven kings one after another in England, about whom I shall not tell you, for I think you would soon forget their names and their histories. The last of these was stabbed in the back while drinking, by Queen Elfrida, who wanted her own son, Ethelred, to be king instead; for which he was called Edward the Martyr. Elfrida became afterwards very penitent, I am glad to say, and in fact she did public penance all the rest of her life, which at least showed that God had given her humility. Ethelred was crowned accordingly by the famous Abbot of Glastonbury, St. Dunstan, a very wise and clever man, who taught the English a great many useful and curious things. Amongst others, he knew how to work in iron and brass, and to play the harp, and compose music to it. He was made at this time Archbishop of Canterbury. At the king's coronation, he made him take this oath, "In the name of the most Holy Trinity, I promise, first, that the Church of God and all Christian people, shall enjoy true peace under my government: secondly, that I will prohibit all manner of rapine and injustice to men of every condition: thirdly, that in all judgments I will cause equity to be united with mercy, that the most clement God may, through his eternal mercy, forgive us all. Amen." Elfrida's crime was expiated in the person of her son, who from the third year of his long reign until its close, was engaged in one ceaseless and bitter struggle against the Danes, which ended in their obtaining for a time, the English crown. Suddenly the fearful standard, the Raven, appeared in the Southampton water, the city was sacked, and the inhabitants made slaves. They burnt and ravaged the country from the Isle of Wight to the Bristol Channel; and Ethelred, being weak and timid, could think of no better way of getting rid of them, than of raising a tax on his unhappy people, called Dane-gold or Dane-money, with which he was so foolish as to think he could buy them off: the Danes of course took the money, laughed at Ethelred, and began to burn and ravage afresh. The Danish chiefs this time were named Olave and Sweyn; Sweyn had been baptised, but had since apostatised, deserted his faith, and become a heathen again. Olave was a better man. He became a sincere Christian, and left off fighting against Ethelred, who at this time married a French or Norman lady, named Emma, and called the Flower of Normandy; at which there was great rejoicing, for her brother, the Duke of Normandy, was a powerful prince, and the poor oppressed English hoped the Normans would help them against the Danes. You will see by-and-bye, how firmly the Normans fulfilled this hope.

The people had not yet finished their merry-makings at this fortunate marriage, when the whole country was roused by a deed of horror, such as had never before been committed in England. I am sorry to say, Ethelred was as cruel as he was bad and foolish. Indeed, I tell you his story partly because I wish you thoroughly to understand what succeeded his reign, and partly to show you how the Anglo-Saxons were degenerating, and losing ground in God's favour, through their effeminacy and forgetfulness of Him who had raised them up into such a holy people. On the feast of St. Brice, (Nov. 13) the king ordered all the Danes to be murdered throughout the kingdom, and these orders were but too faithfully obeyed: men, women, and children; nobles, soldiers, and peasants; were everywhere massacred, whether they had settled down into peaceable subjects, or were merely visitors among their English neighbours. Suppose the Irish should rise and massacre all the English settled in Ireland or visiting them; or the Liverpool and Manchester men should put to death all the Irish in those towns, it would be just such a crime as Ethelred committed and forced his people to share in. He was soon rightly punished. A fleet of strange and wild-looking ships appeared soon after at Exeter, carrying choice soldiers as fierce and wild as their ships, who vowed vengeance on England. These ships were carved in the shape of animals—lions, bulls, great fish, and eagles, and ravens; painted and gilded, and hung round with bright shields, or round plates of steel, which glittered in the sun, and made a fearful sight. Sweyn came himself in a huge ship like a snake coiled up, with a forked tongue and enormous tail. It was hung with bright-coloured flags, and called the "Great Dragon." The fierce avengers brought with them fire and sword as usual. Poor England, or rather proud England, required humbling; and God caused the Norsemen to sweep over it like an avenging fire. The king called together his soldiers, and collected ships in great numbers, but innumerable misfortunes happened. First, they were disheartened and would not fight; then his nobles quarrelled, and one of them ran away with a great many of the new ships; then a great storm rose, and very many were wrecked on the coast, the rest were scattered in helpless and no less confusion, and so ended the last hope of England. You will be very glad to turn from the weak and foolish king, to hear about one of his and one of God's servants, Alpheg, the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Danes took him prisoner, in hopes of extorting gold from him; and for this end, they carried him with them wherever they went, treating him with all manner of cruelty and ill-usage. The Archbishop made no resistance, submitting to the will of God, and endured patiently all their insults. At last they were tired of this, and ordered him to ask the king for a large sum of money. The Archbishop answered, *that he would not ask money from any one for them, and that he would never advise the king to do anything dishonourable.* Then they ordered him to raise it in his diocese. "You press me hard in vain," said Alpheg boldly; "I am not the man to provide Christian flesh for Pagan teeth, by robbing my poor countrymen to enrich their enemies." At this the Danes lost all patience, and being at a drunken banquet, they sent for Alpheg, and rudely shouted out in angry tones, "Gold! Archbishop, gold! Give us gold, or perish!" The Archbishop drew his robes calmly round him, and stood in the midst of the fierce and threatening soldiers, looking into their glaring eyes meekly, and answering not a word. The soldiers, enraged at his meek silence, seized upon a heap of bones and missiles, and cast them at him; till one among them, whom the Archbishop had baptised with his own hands, took his battle-axe and put an end to his sufferings. So, like St. Stephen the Deacon, did Alpheg ascend to receive his crown of martyrdom. I should tell you that it is recorded, that he was made Archbishop, in consequence of St. Andrew the Apostle appearing to St. Dunstan, and ordering him to consecrate Alpheg, who was then Abbot of Bath. Neither misfortune, nor the sublime heroism of the Martyr, had any effect on Ethelred. He continued his bad life, and his foolish plan of paying the Danes; who, of course, stayed as long as they could get anything by so doing. Sweyn resolved to become complete master of England. His soldiers stuck their spears into the soil, or threw them into the rivers, to show that they claimed the land as their spoil and prey. The cities opened their gates to him, or submitted to his arm, for they were tired of Ethelred, and weary of war; and at length the evil-minded king was forced fairly to fly into France, where he took refuge with his brother-in-law, Duke Robert. Sweyn was proclaimed King of England, but the Apostate's triumph was soon cut short, for he died suddenly six weeks after he had seized the crown. Then the English sent to Ethelred messengers, to ask him to come back, and offered him the kingdom, *if he would govern them better than he had done before.* Ethelred faithfully promised to do what they wished; he proclaimed the whole Danish race outlawed, and before the end of Lent was again King of England. In the North, however, Suryn's son, Knute, or Canute, was proclaimed king. Nothing prospered with Ethelred; war broke out afresh, murderings and ravagings began again. The unhappy king died of accumulated disease and misfortune, and the crown soon after passed to a Danish monarch. We have heard a great deal about the Danes, but perhaps it is difficult to give a full idea of the wild, mysterious, and poetical character of the fearful Norsemen. We must hear a little more about them, for we shall now have to look at them in a new light—as our own sovereigns, our forefathers in some degree, and our countrymen. The Norsemen were heathens, as you know, but in their heathenism still lingered some remarkable traces of traditional truth. They had a belief that the

earth was once peopled with giants, who rebelled and fought against the supreme God, or Odin, and that he conquered and punished them, by shutting them up in Hela, or Hell. They had singularly strong notions of the beauty of valour, and endurance, and suffering, and thought that all who had, or endured these, would be happy for ever in Asgard, or Odin's heavenly palace. Thus you see, fierce and cruel as these pagans were, they had some faint notions of truth, and some characteristics, which, in good hands, made them fine, and generous, and valuable men. Their very hatred to the priests, and churches, and holy things of another faith, was partly good, for they thought tolerating such, a departure from the truth, as they firmly believed it, and this was hateful to them. Such a character is very much more pleasing in God's sight, than a lukewarm and indifferent one; one which thinks it matters little in what way people serve Him, or that there should be a mixture of creeds. It is often very unpleasing to be taunted with "bigotry," and "illiberality," and what are currently called "narrow views;" but if you will consider a little (as far as is possible) the course of God's church, you will see how from the first she abhorred and deprecated a *mixture*, or confusion in faith or practice. St. John was one day bathing at Ephesus, and Cerinthus, the author of a wicked heresy, came into the bath; St. John immediately fled, as if a wild beast were behind him, and exclaimed with holy indignation, that if he had stayed under the same roof with a heretic he should have expected to be buried under the ruins of the building. So, from the very first, had the church set her mark against heresy, and so was the sacred horror handed down from Apostle to Bishop, and from Bishop to Teacher. In this spirit was given the word to "come out from error," to "be separate," to "touch no unclean (forbidden) thing," to "hold fast," and to mark well the boundaries of truth; for well did they know that Satan and his train of schism and confusion, would come in like a flood upon the Heritage of God.

What I have said will help you to understand what the Danish character might become, what it actually did become, in the person of Canute, the christian and zealous Danish king. Canute, or Knute, began to reign in the year 1017. The nobles welcomed him heartily, and took an oath of obedience to him. He took off his glove, and clasping their hands, swore to be gentle, just, and upright, as well to the English as to the Danes. He formed a royal body-guard, called the Thingmanna, out of the crews of forty ships, and drew up laws and rules for their use. He did this to prevent the frequent bloodshed among the soldiers. It curiously happened that Canute was the first to break these laws, by murdering a soldier in a fit of rage. He immediately assembled his Thingmans, came down from his throne, confessed his fault, and asked them to punish him. They replied, they would leave it to his own sense of justice; so he fined himself (according to the punishments of those times) 360 talents of gold, nine times as much as the usual fine. Canute had been baptised in his infancy, and though he had never practised his faith, and given way to fierce and cruel passions, the seed of baptismal grace was not lost, but began soon to wax strong, and to bring forth fruit. He openly lamented his cruelties and his follies; he made the English nobles equal in every thing to the Danes, and made them every compensation in his power. He called a *Witan*, or Parliament, at Oxford, and made the English and Danish nobles forgive, and swear friendship to one another. He made, or rather revised and remodelled, a code of laws, in which he ordered the judges to be watchful to prevent crime, but to spare human life if possible; *to treat the penitent offender more mercifully than the impenitent;* and to bear more harshly on the rich and powerful than on the poor and weak, *because the latter were often driven to crime by poverty and want.* It were to be wished, that our modern-day legislators would adopt King Canute's principle of law-making. He also forbade Christians to be sold as slaves, because, said he, they were liable to be placed under heathen masters, and made to forget or forsake their faith. He strictly forbade any kind of heathen worship of the sun, moon, rocks, or rivers, which the Danes had been accustomed to honour; and denounced witchcraft, and all such superstitious absurdities. He built a magnificent church at Ashdown; richly endowed the Abbey of St. Edmunds; and decorated the Cathedral of Winchester with such splendour, that an old Chronicler says, it was quite fearful to behold, so bright was it with gold and precious stones, that it dazzled the eyes of the beholders, as if it had been more than human glory. The same writer says, that he established such order among the clergy, that all men feared him; so strict was he, and so desirous of God's glory. He also mentions many wise and holy men who rose up under the peaceful and austere discipline now established. When Canute had watched over the spiritual well-being of his kingdom, he set sail for his own country, Denmark, taking with him pious missionaries, to evangelize his heathen brethren. He placed these Bishops there to watch over the new flocks. He built at Canterbury a beautiful shrine to the martyred Archbishop Alpheg; and when the citizens of London would not give up his relics, which they piously honoured, the bold daring, and peremptory disposition of the Norse Viking* again appeared in a most characteristic manner. Canute marched two bands of soldiers (probably the Thingmanna) into the city, forcibly seized the relics of the Saint, embarked them on the Thames, and carried them away in a ship of war, with a great dragon's head carved at the bows, to Canterbury, where they were interred with solemn pomp. England then enjoyed great rest and happiness, such as had not been known since the days of King Alfred; for the whole land was well-ordered from end to end, and every office was filled with ability, and administered with vigour and regularity. Canute was universally beloved; his wild, fierce character, had become softened and sweetened by Christian practice. It was changed into strength and manly decision. He was cheerful, courteous, and accessible, even to his meanest subjects and to beggars. Like all his race, he was passionately fond of ballads and rhymes, and cherished and multiplied the minstrels, and *scalds* (poets), which cheered merry England at that day; then really mer ry, because devout, hearty, and faithful. He wrote ballads himself, and many an English peasant, over his work, or on a dark night's walk, would amuse himself with one of these, which was an especial favourite with them all. One verse of this ballad remains to this time. It was composed one day when the king was rowing on the river Nene near Ely minster, and as he glided under the cathedral walls, the solemn chaunt of the sweet psalms sung in choir by the canons, floated over the water, and smote the ear of the religious Dane; who broke out into the expression of delight which he embodied afterwards in his song:—

> "Merrily sung the monks within Ely,
> When Canute the king, rowed thereby:
> 'Row knights, row near the land,' he cried,
> 'And hear these monks so sweetly sing.'"†

The earnest and fervent devotion, which such a character as Canute's was soon to attain, could not be satisfied without performing a pilgrimage to Rome. He had lived a wild life, had committed great cruelties, and done many acts of despotic injustice; therefore he felt that to do merely as other men did was not enough for him. God had showed him greater mercies than usual, in rescuing him from an evil and dangerous life, and a hardened conscience; and he felt that greater sacrifices must be made, and greater penance be performed by him in return. The dauntless and ardent king, therefore, took a pilgrim's staff in his hand, bound a pilgrim's wallet at his back, and started forth alone to the Holy Mother city. In his way he visited all the churches in the Low Countries, kneeling as a pilgrim at their shrines, but leaving at each one an offering as a king; so that it became a kind of proverb to say, "The blessing of God be upon Canute, king of the English!" He stayed at Rome a long time, visiting, with many other kings who were there on the same pious errand, the shrines of the Apostles and Martyrs, and nourishing his mind with more deeply-grounded strength and fervent piety. When he came back, he passed through Pavia, a very

* Viking, as the Norse pirates were called, means a creeper among creeks; a name given to them from their creeping round the bays and headlands, in which they suddenly landed to ravage.

† "Merie sungen the muneches binnen Ely,
Tha Cuut Ching rew there by,
Roweth, cnihtes, nær the land,
And here we thes muneches soeng."

old city in the north of Italy, where the great St. Austin lies buried. Canute bought the arm of the holy Doctor for a large sum of money, and gave it to the church at Coventry. He then went into Denmark, from whence he wrote a letter to the Abbot of Tavistock. I shall copy part of this really Catholic letter, to show you in what kind of spirit the once fierce-minded heathen now was:

"Knute, King of all Denmark, England, and Norway, and of part of Sweden, to Egelnoth, the Metropolitan (Bishop of London), to Archbishop Alfric, to all the Bishops and Chiefs, and to all the nation of the English, both nobles and commoners, greeting.—I hereby inform you that I have been lately to Rome, to pray for the remission of my sins, and for the safety of my kingdoms, and of the nations that are subject to my sceptre. It is long since I bound myself by vow to make this pilgrimage, but I had been prevented by state affairs. I most humbly return thanks to Almighty God, that he has allowed me to visit the tombs of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and every holy place within and without Rome, and to honour and venerate them in person. And this I have done, having learned from my teachers, that the Apostle, St. Peter, received from our Lord the great power of binding and loosing, and that he holds the Key of the Heavenly Kingdom. For this I thought it highly useful to ask his patronage with God.

"There was held this year, at the Feast of Easter, a great assemblage of noble persons with my Lord, Pope John, viz:—the Emperor Conrad, and the first men of all nations, who received me honourably, and gave me rich presents, gold and silver vessels, and vestments of rich stuffs. I took the opportunity of treating with the Pope, the Emperor, and the Princes, on the grievances of my people, both English and Danes, that they might enjoy more equal law, and more secure protection on their way to Rome. My demands were granted, and it was enacted that my men, whether pilgrims or merchants, should henceforth pass to and from Rome without paying unlawful tolls.

"Now, therefore, be it known to you, that I have dedicated my life to the service of God, to govern my kingdom with equity, and to observe justice in all things. If, in the heat of my youthful days, I have done anything contrary thereto, it is my intention, with God's help, to make full amends. Therefore, I beg and command those, to whom I have confided any government, to do no injustice either to rich or poor, as they wish to preserve my friendship, and to save their own souls. Let all persons, noble or ignoble, obtain their rights according to law: I want no money raised by injustice.

"I am now going to Denmark, to conclude peace with those nations, who would have deprived us of both crown and life if they could. But God has destroyed their means, and will, I trust of His goodness, preserve us, and humble our enemies. After this is finished, it is my intention to return to England, when the weather is fair enough to sail. But I have sent you this letter before-hand, that all my people may rejoice at my prosperity; for ye all know that I have never spared myself, nor my labours, in the advantage of my subjects.

"Lastly, I entreat all my Bishops, and all the Sheriffs, by the obedience they owe to me and to God, that the Church-dues may every where be paid, viz:—the plough-alms, the tithes of cattle, the Peter's-pence, the tithes of fruit in autumn, and the Kirk-shot at the Feast of St. Martin. If this be not done, I will punish the offender on my return, according to law. Fare-ye-well."

Such, in the eleventh century, was the *King's Speech*. How far it may be considered the production of a "dark" and "barbarous" time, you will be best judges. The son of an apostate Dane, and the descendant of fierce heathen pirates, perhaps knew some things which we have forgotten, and should do well to call to mind again. He knew when to pay just allegiance; where to seek true help; how best to redress grievances. All these things he knew were to be sought *in* and *by* the True Church. What has been gained by deserting and despising this Church, I leave you also to weigh and decide. Meanwhile I return to Canute, of whom I must tell you one thing more.

After he came from Rome, he was sitting one day with some of his nobles on the shore of the Southampton water. His power was at its height; his dauntless and severe character was feared as well as loved; and his nobles, to flatter him, said that the sea even was subject to his command. The king wishing to read them a lesson, ordered his chair of state to be placed at the very edge of the water, and sat down in it. The tide was coming up, and the king ordered it to retire from him, that he might not be wetted. The tide of course flowed on notwithstanding, and the waves rolled over the king's knees. Then rising and turning to his confused nobles, Canute said to them, "Confess ye now how vain and nought is the might of an earthly king, compared with His, who can say, 'Hitherto shall ye come, and no farther.'" Then did the religious Dane take the crown from off his head, and placing it on the great Crucifix in Winchester Cathedral, never wore it again. An old writer of the History of Winchester says, that the most powerful king Canute, thenceforth studied in all ways to practise greater humility, which doubtless he asked of the Blessed Virgin, to whom he had great devotion and love.

Wisely indeed did he choose this better part in time, and wisely did he seek to know himself; for it is a hard thing for any man to do so, and much more for a king, who is always surrounded by pomp, and who cannot but feel his own power. Canute had used both pomp and power in God's service; and, therefore, he feared not when the time came for him to die. For now, as the same writer says, he touched upon his last end, having concluded his work. His body was buried with great solemnity in Winchester Cathedral, which he so much loved; but his soul departed to its heavenly reward.

PURE AIR.

See the half-fed child of the wilderness and bleak moor, and mark well his contrast. That child will make his meal of a raw turnip or a few blackberries, and laugh and work as they digest and become good blood. No food is lost to him; it is all appropriated—and well too—to the purpose of his constitution. His lungs, playing in a pure air, maintain the health and energy of his circulation, balance all his functions, strengthen every limb, and build him up a hale, hearty, and vigorous man. Ruddy and rollicking, and free as the breezes that feed him—a stranger alike to a passion or a pang—he journeys through existence to that old age which pronounces the termination of man's natural life. He suffers but sparingly "the ills that flesh is heir to;" and, if disease do attack him, his mighty stamina soon enable him to throw off the burden. The children born of such a parent, and nurtured under like circumstances, inherit the strength and soundness of their sire; and hence the origin of that "bold peasantry," which the poet has properly denominated "its country's pride."—*Medical Times.*

AN UNEXPECTED RESULT.

At a secluded and quiet little village, not 20 miles from Hatherleigh, lately, at a tithe meeting, while some of the bluff yeomanry were regaling themselves with the "strong beer," furnished by "mine host" of the Bell—among other subjects which was then being discussed—a farmer (speaking of his being over-stocked with cattle) offered to sell 20 of his bullocks as a bargain, viz.:—he would have one farthing for the first bullock, and a halfpenny for the second, and so on—doubling the sum on each succeeding bullock up to the twentieth. The jobber thought now, or never, was the time to "nail" a bargain; and, after a little calculating, and some time in drawing out the "brown purse," and abstracting therefrom two five-pound notes, he gave them as earnest, which the farmer pocketed—and is now waiting the jobber's pleasure to fetch the cattle, and pay the remaining money—which he is shy of doing. 1,092*l.* 5*s.* 3¾*d.* is no joke for 20 bullocks.—*Exeter Post.*

AN AMERICAN BISHOP'S REPORT OF A BIBLE SOCIETY MEETING.

New York.—Mr. Webb—Dear Sir,—I would call your attention to a part of a letter which I received from a most respected Episcopalian, dated 11th inst., telling me that if I would attend the meeting of the New York Bible Society on the 20th, it would "go very far to disprove the impression, that has gone abroad that our pure and holy Church is opposed to the distribution of the Scriptures." Thus invited, and for so important a purpose, I went to the Tabernacle, where the said Society met, and saw gathered a great number of people. There was an organ, and a choir singing, and then followed a report of facts and statement of accounts. Afterwards a Methodist preacher spoke pretty well —and then a Captain of a vessel, apparently a truly renewed man, told us of the great benefit the Bible had been, and would be to seamen. Thus things went on well enough; and my mind was well affected towards this Society, as a means of spreading the Word of God.

That it was all in the way of "other denominations," I saw plainly enough; yet the end, the important end of spreading the Holy Scriptures, and by that means reaching thousands who never hear them as we read them by calendar rule more than three times a-year, was evidently answered. Under such a train of thought I blessed God that good was done;—according to the invitation sent me, I intended to "say a few words" by way of encouragement in the face of all that very decorous assembly. And when I should go away I intended to speak to the members of our communion everywhere very favourably of the Bible Society, of which they had done me the honour to make me a Director for life.

But I must confess that my mind was materially altered by the succeeding speech of a gentleman from Poughkeepsie. Being well prepared, as appeared by his written heads of discourse, which he held in his hand, and to which he frequently referred, his speech was somewhat methodical and very long; but long as it was there appeared no lack of interest taken in it by the audience, for they *clapped him* very many times; and when done, some of them came upon the platform to congratulate him, and to express their entire acquiescence in what he had said.

And what were the sentiments uttered by this gentleman which had so pleased the audience? They were those of one who evidently had not read, certainly not duly studied, the true meaning of the very Scriptures of which he was speaking. He represented the Bible as a very desirable thing, because it broke down all distinctions in society. It struck the crown from the king, and tore the sacred vestments from the ministers of God. The Bible, he said, "levelled up all," and no man with the Bible in his hand ought to consider himself below any other one. In short, the speech of this gentleman seemed that of a downright "Radical," who would pull up as he would an apple tree, human society by the *roots*, eat up the apples, and then leave the tree to die and perish, for want of moisture.

In a certain sense, I could agree with him as to the humbling effects which a true interpretation of the Scriptures would have upon the human family. In the sight of God all men are equal. All were made by him, and all are miserable sinners against his law, and as such are redeemed as of free grace by the blood of a common Saviour; and all must be judged by one Lord, who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

But the truth that all men are equal in this sense does not, in my humble opinion, destroy our relations in society—on the contrary, it points out and establishes them—and binds closely the obligations which it imposes on all to do their duty in their respective stations. Accordingly we find, that in no case do we read of this "levelling spirit" being encouraged in Holy Scripture: "Children obey your parents"—"Servants, obey your masters" —"Honour to whom honour"—"tribute to whom tribute is due"—and "obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves"—are the undisguised principles inculcated in the Holy Scripture; and it is remarkably pertinent to notice that the Apostle paid no regard to the outward condition of man, whether he were a master or a slave, when converting him to the true faith of Jesus Christ. Philemon, the rich, the noble Philemon, felt the power of divine grace humbling him to the dust for his sins—when sitting under the preached Gospel by St. Paul. The same effect was produced through the same Gospel preached by the same apostle, when a prisoner at Rome, on the heart of Onesimus, the runaway slave of Philemon. And thus both master and servant became penitent believers—both alike the children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. But in this case do we hear of any "*levelling effect*" of the Gospel on these candidates for immortality? Did Philemon lose his standing as a master of his household into which Onesimus, his wandering, now penitent servant returned? And did the holy apostle tell Onesimus, that being now a Christian, he must "level himself up" to his former master as his equal in a temporal sense? Nothing of this nature appears. Indeed all the approved commentators on the Holy Scriptures deny this principle of "levelling" to be set forth in the Bible. It is the height of inconsistency, not to say untruth, to pretend to distribute "the Bible without note or comment," and at the same time listen with applause to such a speech as we heard last night.—*Cour. and Enq.*

Philander Chase.

MAN.

VERSIFIED FROM AN APOLOGUE BY DR. SHERIDAN.

Affliction one day as she hark'd to the roar
Of the stormy and struggling billow,
Drew a beautiful form on the sands of the shore,
With the branch of a weeping willow.

Jupiter, struck with the noble plan
As he roam'd on the verge of the ocean,
Breath'd on the figure, and calling it Man,
Endued it with life and motion.

A creature so glorious in mind and in frame,
So stamp'd with each parent's impression,
Among them a point of contention became,
Each claiming the right of possession.

He is mine, said Affliction; I gave him his birth,
I alone am his cause of creation:—
The materials were furnish'd by me, answered Earth:—
I gave him, said Jove, animation.

The gods, all assembled in solemn Divan,
After hearing each claimant's petition,
Pronounc'd a definitive verdict on Man,
And thus settled his fate's disposition:

Let Affliction possess her own child, till the woes
Of life cease to harass and goad it;
After death, give his body to Earth, whence it rose;
And his spirit to Jove, who bestowed it.

UNIVERSALITY OF POPULAR LEGENDS.

All tales have wings, whether they come from the east or the north; and they soon become denizens, wherever they alight. Thus it has happened, that the tale which charmed the wandering Arab in his tent, or cheered the northern peasant by his winter fire, alike held on its journey toward England and Scotland. Dr. Leyden was surprised when he first perused the fabliaux of "The Poor Scholar," "The Three Thieves," and "The Sexton of Cluni," to recognise the popular stories which he had often heard in infancy. He was then young in the poetical studies of the antiquary, or he would not have been at a loss to know whether the Scots drew their tales from the French, or the French from their Scottish intercourse; or whether they originated with the Celtic or the Scandinavian, or sometimes even with the Orientalists. The genealogy of many a tale, as well as the humours of native jesters, from the days of Henry the Eighth to those of Joe Miller, who, as somebody has observed, now too begins to be ancient, may be traced not only to France, to Spain, and to Italy, but to Greece and Rome, and at length to Persia and to India. Our most familiar stories have afforded instances. The tale of Whittington and his Cat, supposed to be indigenous to our country, was first narrated by Arlotto, in his *Novella delle Gatte*, in his *Facetie*, which were printed soon after his death, 1483: the tale is told of a merchant of Genoa. We must, however, recollect, that Arlotto had been a visitor at the court of England. The other puss, though without her boots, may be seen in Straparola's *Piacvoli Notti*. The familiar little Hunchback of the Arabian Nights has been a universal favourite; it may be found everywhere; in "The Seven Wise Masters," in the *Gesta Romanorum*, and in Le Grand's *Fabliaux*. The popular tale of Llywellyn's greyhound, whose grave we still visit at Bethgelert, Sir William Jones discovered in Persian tradition; and it has given rise to a proverb, "As repentant as the man who killed his greyhound." In *Les Maxims des Orientaux* of Galland, we find several of our popular tales. Bluebeard, Red Riding Hood, and Cinderella, are tales told alike in the nurseries of England and France, Germany and Denmark; and the domestic warning to the Lady Bird, the chaunt of our earliest day, is sung by the nurse of Germany. All nations seem alike concerned in this co-partnership of tale-telling; borrowing, adulterating, clipping, and even receiving back, the identical coin which had circulated wherever it was found. Douce, one of whose favourite pursuits was tracing the origin and ramification of tales, to my knowledge, could have afforded a large volume of this genealogy of romance; but that volume probably reposes for the regale of the next century, that literary antiquary being deterred by caustic reviewers from the publication of his useful researches.—*D'Israeli's Amenities of Literature.*

POPULAR REFINEMENT.

Some persons may object to encourage anything like refinement amongst the operatives; and others, who would hardly object in open terms, find it difficult to reconcile themselves to the idea of it. Whatever there is in this repugnance that arises from any selfish motive should be instantly cast aside. Do not let us be meanly afraid that the classes below us will tread too closely on our heels. What a disgrace it is, if, with our much larger opportunities of leisure, with professions that demand a perpetual exercise of the intellectual faculties, we cannot preserve, on the average, an intellectual superiority fully equivalent to the difference of rank and station. Let the vast tracts now left barren smile with cultivation: the happier lands, which the rivers of civilization have enriched for ages, will still maintain their supremacy. And remember this, that every insight you give the humbler classes into the vast expanse of knowledge, you give them the means of estimating, with a deference founded on reason, those persons who do possess knowledge of any kind. Let us have faith that knowledge must in the long run lead to good; and let us not fancy that our prosperity as a class depends upon the ignorance of those beneath us. Has not our partial enlightenment taught us in some measure to be reconciled to the fact of there being classes above us? And why should we fear that knowledge, which smoothes so many rugged things in life, should be found unavailing to soften the inequalities of social distinction? It is the ignorant barbarians who can pluck the Roman senate by the beard; and who, in the depth of savageness, can see nothing in sex, age, station, or office, to demand their veneration. Make the men around you more rational, more instructed, more helpful, more hopeful creatures if you can: above all things, treat them justly; and I think you may put aside any apprehension of disturbing the economy of the various orders of the state. And if it can be *so* disturbed, let it be so.—*The Claims of Labour.*

PUSEY VIEWS OF FASTING.

It is very difficult to decide exactly what is the right mode of fasting. To lay down precise rules is almost impossible, on account of the variety of persons, circumstances, and differences of health. To some, absolute fasting might be death, and others, who are poor, seldom have more food than is required to sustain the necessary strength for their labour. It will occur to many that, in the present state of society, some inconvenience would arise from fasting; our domestic habits, and still more our social enjoyments, would be interfered with. "How ridiculous," some will say, "when we have an invitation to dinner, to have to look at the church calendar, and see whether it is a fast-day. How many pleasant engagements we shall have to decline! and what are we to say when people ask us? We cannot say we stay at home because it is a fast-day; we should be laughed at." Now I am persuaded that this slight inconvenience itself is one of the advantages of the system. Religion *ought* to regulate our daily lives. We *ought* to make our social engagements bend to our duty. Are there not six days in the week, or at least five, on any of which we may have our dinner parties, or other festivities? Let a few persons of rank and influence resolutely set their faces against the desecration of the church's ordinance by feasting instead of fasting, and it would soon come to be understood, that when people invited their friends to an entertainment they ought first to consult the church calendar; and that to ask a strict churchman to dinner on a fast-day, was as much as to say they did not want to see him.—*Rev. William Gresby.*

This stupid self-conceit robs us of the most powerful of all weapons. If we would only look back to the state of things in the days of our sensible, very pious but very spirited, Catholic ancestors, and show how we are squeezed at present in comparison to the gentle pressure that our forefathers endured; if we would be *just*, and look back thus, how speedy and complete would be our triumph! But, we will not be *just:* we are *ashamed* to be just: because we cannot be just without frankly avowing, that the event called the "Reformation" was a monstrous injury to the country. We could tell people they do not want to be *told;* but, we could *remind* them, that the Catholic clergy divided the tithes into *three parts*, one part for the poor, one to build and repair and ornament churches, and one for the priest, which third he spent in the parish; but, we cannot remind them of this, without reminding ourselves of the foul and unmerited abuse, that we have, all our lives long, been heaping on the Catholic religion and clergy. We are feeble in argument, we forego our strongest means of attack, only because we have not the courage to be just; and, if ever there were a case wherein a good *squeezing* was merited, ours is that case.—*Cobbett.*

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